



STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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TOM LUNA
STATE SUPERINTENDENT
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

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Idaho State Department of Education
www.sde.idaho.gov

IDAHO RECOGNIZES TEACHERS FOR USING DIGITAL LEARNING TO RAISE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

BOISE – Teachers, parents and students across Idaho and the country celebrated Digital Learning Day. It was the second-annual Digital Learning Day in Idaho, as proclaimed by Idaho Governor C.L. “Butch” Otter.

On Digital Learning Day, the Idaho State Department of Education awarded nine Idaho educators for using technology in innovative ways to improve student learning.

“I am so proud of our talented teachers who work hard every day to find new ways to engage students in their learning and raise academic achievement,” Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Luna said. “Digital Learning Day is a great way for us to celebrate their success in the classroom and share these best practices with other teachers and educators across the state.”

The goal of Digital Learning Day, a partnership with the Alliance for Excellent Education, is to highlight innovative teaching taking place in classrooms in Idaho and across the country so teachers can collaborate and share best practices with each other.

Digital learning provides students and families with more choices than ever in public education. The state has expanded digital learning opportunities in the classroom, such as access to digital content, interactive technologies, and the Idaho Education Network. Through digital learning, students not only learn from the great teachers in their school but also now have access to other highly effective teachers in schools across the state.

Four Idaho teachers earned awards through Idaho State Department of Education’s new 21st Century Classroom Recognition Awards program.

- **Best Video:** Mrs. Jennifer Duckwall of Mountain Valley Elementary School in the Bonneville School District. The winning video, called *The Geometry Rap*, is available online at <http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/nextPractices/>. It was completely produced, directed, written and edited by her students. Mrs. Duckwall said this type of digital learning helps drive student achievement forward in her classroom. “In my 2nd grade classroom after implementing digital technology such as this, my average math score was of a 5-6th grade competency and 96% of the class being above the 75th percentile in the nation,” she said in her application.
- **Best Lesson Plan:** Mrs. Kim Miller of Star Elementary School in Joint School District No. 2 (Meridian). Her winning lesson plan, *Flow of Energy in an Ecosystem*, is now available to all Idaho teachers through Schoolnet, the statewide instructional management system. It is aligned to state content standards and incorporates digital content.
- **Best Unit Plan:** Mrs. Kim Miller and Mrs. Marita Diffenbaugh of Star Elementary School in Joint School District No. 2 (Meridian). A unit plan is four to five lesson plans. Their winning unit plan, *Mystery Substances Unit for 5th grade*, is now available to all Idaho teachers through Schoolnet, the statewide instructional management system. It is aligned to state content standards and incorporates digital content.
- **Best Practices in Visual Arts:** Ms. Amber McVey of Pepper Ridge Elementary School in Joint School District No. 2 (Meridian). Her winning lesson plan, *Picasso Art*, combines geometry concepts and art concepts to teach students about Picasso’s theory of cubism. It is now available to all Idaho teachers through Schoolnet, the statewide instructional management system.

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For winning the grand prize in each category, these teachers will receive a financial award of between \$300 and \$1,000 to use in their classroom as well as a free virtual field trip for their students on the Idaho Education Network. The State Department of Education also awarded several finalists in each category.

In addition to these awards, five other Idaho educators were recognized with Idaho Education Network (IEN) Talk Awards for using the Idaho Education Network in their school or district to provide greater learning opportunities to students.

- **College Access Champion:** Amanda Hansen, a teacher at West Side High School. She earned the award for using the IEN to promote college preparation through SAT and ACT preparation classes.
- **Rookie of the Year:** Luci Asumendi-Mereness, Principal of Homedale High School. She earned the award for championing the use of IEN classes to fill gaps in core curriculum, offer electives and get those hard-to-find classes for students in Homedale.
- **Most Valuable Player:** Dale Garrard, a teacher at Centennial High School in Joint School District No. 2 (Meridian). As the Lead Teacher of World Languages at Centennial High, Mr. Garrard, teaches Japanese over the IEN to the entire Meridian School District!
- **IEN Innovation:** Idaho Distance Education Academy. This school earned the award for its innovative, distinctive use of the IEN to hold virtual sessions to supplement its curriculum.
- **IEN Achievement Award:** Dr. John Miller, Instructional Dean at the College of Southern Idaho. This award honors one exceptional education professional for outstanding promotion or use of the IEN. He earned this award for CSI's outstanding use of the IEN to offer dual credit courses to high school students. Students have earned 2,200 dual credits from CSI through the Idaho Education Network.

The Idaho State Department of Education also unveiled its new Next Practices website, a place where Idaho educators can see innovative ideas and practices happening in other schools and districts across the state.

The Next Practices website captures some these "next practices" and will continue to update with more in the coming months and years. We encourage you to visit this and see some of the great things that are happening across Idaho today:

<http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/nextPractices/>.

For more information on these opportunities and Digital Learning Day in Idaho, visit

<http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/digitalLearningDay/>.

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